



# NCPIE Update

*A Publication of the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education*

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## **PTA Recommendations for Parent Involvement in the Reauthorization of ESEA-NCLB**

As the largest volunteer child advocacy organization in the nation, PTA reminds our country of its obligations to children. PTA provides parents and families with a powerful voice to speak on behalf of every child and the resources to help children succeed in school and in life. PTA does not act alone. Working in cooperation with many national education, health, safety, and child advocacy groups and federal agencies, the national office collaborates on programs and projects that benefit children and bring valuable resources to PTA members.

PTA's recommendations for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, including the No Child Left Behind Act (ESEA-NCLB), are grounded in four core principles: 1. More accountability to parents, 2. Better data through a more understandable delivery system, 3. Better resources to help teachers and parents, 4. Community Support. The PTA urges the inclusion of the following specific provisions in the next reauthorization of the ESEA-NCLB.

### **I. Retention and Expansion of the Parent Involvement Plans**

**Retain:** Every provision within section 1118 of Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act **Expansion:** Every LEA shall establish a parental involvement plan which shall do the following:

- Provide details on resources, programs, materials, and activities within every district that help parents support the academic achievement of their children both in and outside of the classroom
- Provide ways the school will communicate to parents how their school compares district-wide, state-wide, and nationally to other schools of similar size and demographics
- Identify communication mechanisms between the LEA and parents that will be used to disseminate information quickly and using a format and language that is clear and easily understood
- Establish effective mechanisms for LEAs to receive and process feedback and comments from parents and parent groups on their school's parent involvement plan
- Designate how the LEA will provide information to parents on the Supplemental Education Services (SES) currently available to students in the school, including:

A summary of all services and choices available, such as tutoring and the option to transfer to a higher performing school

A list of tutoring services, including where they are being offered, by whom they are being offered, and any costs or expenses for parents customarily associated with the service

A list of before- and after-school programs within the school district providing tutoring services

A list of the schools from which a parent may choose if the student is a candidate for Public School Choice

- Identify a deadline by which every school shall distribute all AYP material and choice options to parents. This deadline must provide parents with sufficient time to investigate all SES options available for their child.

- Provide information on how to contact the parent committee (section II) and make this easily accessible to parents and members of the community.
- Establish that school-family compacts are to be based on current student achievement data and academic goals which will help strengthen the subjects which data suggests needs to be improved.
- Detail ways of increasing community involvement with the schools and students. This involvement should include both in- and out-of-school activities. These community connections can range from students providing public service in the community to local businesses working with teachers to incorporate career exploration opportunities into classroom curriculum.

*PTA comprises nearly 6 million members in 25,000 local, council, district, and state PTAs in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Department of Defense Dependents Schools overseas.*

*PTA, governed by an active board of directors, provides leadership, programs, support, and resources to its members at all levels of the organization.*

## **II. Parent Committees**

Every LEA must establish a parent committee.

- The parent committee shall consist of parents of students currently enrolled in the school district. The committee shall be representative of the students in the district with regard to both community and school demographics, as well as student characteristics.
- The parent committee shall be responsible for providing the LEA with recommendations on the school district's parent involvement plan and parent involvement policies.
- The parent committee shall be a full partner in monitoring their school's writing, implementation, and dissemination of the parent involvement plan.
- The parent committee will provide technical assistance to the LEA in helping those schools who are deemed "In Need of Improvement."
- The parent committee will work in accord with the state PIRC (section III) in making recommendations or public statements regarding school improvements.
- The parent committee shall operate independently of the LEA in making recommendations and/or public statements regarding school improvements.
- Parent committees are encouraged to work with the parent organizations in the school district, as well as with local community leaders, to provide input into the school's parent involvement policy.
- Each parent committee must hold meetings at least two times a year, providing parents information and resources on how to work with teachers and school officials to support their child's academic success. This information should be community-specific and help remove cultural and language barriers that often inhibit the parental involvement process.

## **III. Accountability**

Every state must designate an office or position of parent involvement within their department of education.

- The state Office of Parent Involvement (PI) will monitor and compile a report to the state department of education on every district's implementation of parent involvement policies and recommendations for improvement.
- The state Office of PI will provide information and assistance to help LEAs comply with the parental involvement provisions in the law.  
LEAs must be held accountable for implementing their parental involvement plan. When directed by their state Office of PI, LEAs must include the parent committee and the state PIRC in helping reform a school identified as "In Need of Improvement."
- A PIRC must be designated in every state. Where the population of a state warrants (i.e. size or diversity), more than one PIRC should be established. This decision will be made by the US Department of Education with the advice and counsel of parents and local leaders in the state.
- The state PIRC (SPIRC) shall establish itself as a one-stop shop for implementing the parent involvement provisions of applicable federal and state laws. This includes providing leadership and

*State PTAs are the liaison between the local PTA and national PTA, helping each to function effectively and to support and sustain the other.*

*PTAs at the local level are valuable assets to their schools and communities, providing parent involvement and educational information, resources, events, and activities.*

*They are linked to the state PTA and national PTA; forming a strong network of members working on behalf of all children and youth.*

technical support, and helping to identify potential sources of financial support to schools, parents, and the communities it serves.

- The SPIRC is responsible for disseminating information to the parents within their catchment area. This information includes but is not limited to: information on parental involvement plans, best practices for parental involvement, support for parents in need of assistance getting active in their child's school, an established line of communication for parents to report abuses and obstacles, available SES services, and after-school options.
- The state Office of PI must provide a copy of each LEA's parent involvement plan to its respective SPIRC. Within 90 days of receiving the plan, the SPIRC shall identify areas within each plan which can be improved upon or are below requirements. The SPIRC must report their findings and any recommended changes to the state Office of PI, as well as officers and parents of students in the school.
- Then, the state Office of PI must review these recommendations. After an approval process involving local parents and community members, the Office of PI will authorize the SPIRC or a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) to provide these parental services at the expense of the LEA.
- A SPIRC must be notified immediately by the state when a school is

found to be "In Need of Improvement."

- The SPIRC must ensure that the LEA has notified parents of students in the school with this designation and given the options available to the parents/students.
- The SPIRC must review the school's specific parental involvement plan to identify which areas need improvement. Recommended changes shall be communicated to the Office of PI, parents, and LEA officials. After an approval process involving local parents and community leaders, the Office of PI may authorize the SPIRC or a NGO to institute these changes.
- The SPIRC or NGO shall institute these changes while working cooperatively with the school on effective strategies and realistic timelines for improvement that ensure the school will be able to successfully implement the changes.

#### **IV. Supplemental Education Services (SES)**

Supplemental education services can be a vital tool in helping ensure that all students are getting the extra help they need. The law should encourage LEAs to provide new, flexible, and innovative strategies to provide these essential services.

- SES services must be integrated with the after-school provisions within ESEA-NCLB to help parents identify and secure before- and after-school services that are affordable, accessible, and available.
- Coordinate the development of regulations and rules that will enable appropriate 21st-century community learning center grantees and other after-school programs that provide academic support to qualify as SES providers.

#### **V. Funding**

As with most portions of ESEA-NCLB, funding is a major concern. To effectively expand and implement the parental provisions, particularly the responsibilities and roles of PIRCs, adequate funding is essential.

- PIRCs shall receive dedicated funding based upon the number of Title I students in each state.

#### **VI. Community Involvement**

In general, the community-school partnership needs to be renewed. Holding schools accountable to the needs of their community is essential in helping children succeed. The community can be a great facilitator in helping schools to achieve the ESEA-NCLB goal of 100 percent proficiency in math and reading.

- Require the LEA to provide ways to link schools to community goals and objectives.
- Require community leaders to be a part of the monitoring and evaluation processes for the academic and parental involvement provisions of the law.
- Provide a communication link for community members to comment on their LEA's academic and parental involvement plan to the state.
- Provide a mechanism and support for community organizations and groups to become active partners in providing information on supplemental education services, parental involvement provisions, and AYP reporting to other members of the community.

## **VI. Professional Development**

A portion of the Title II grant funds for the teacher development/highly-qualified teacher initiative shall be used to help expand the abilities of teachers, principals, and other school officials to effectively engage parents in the education of their children and in school improvements.

- Training for teachers, principals, and parents/guardians in skills to enhance effective communication with parents and members of the broader community
- Such training may involve local and state parent groups and organizations.
- Such training should include parental engagement strategies and the accountability goals of their schools' parent involvement plan.

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